

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-12 HA-05 /100 W

-----042754 071053Z /16-50

O P 061340Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1734

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MASERU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMEOBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY

/AMEMBASSY MBABANE PRIORITY 038

AMEMBASSY ACCRA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANJUL PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4840

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV RH VS UK

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SUBJECT: RHODESIA: TUNISIA BACKS ANGLO-US PLAN

REF: STATE 169971

1. SUMMARY: BRITISH AMBASSADOR AND I RECEIVED FIRM

ASSURANCES TODAY THAT TUNISIAN DELEGATION AT KHARTOUM IS

INSTRUCTED TO GIVE ITS COMPLETE SUPPORT TO THE ANGLO-

US PROPOSALS FOR A Rhodesian Settlement. GOT BELIEVES IT REMAINS THE ONLY HOPE FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AND OFFERS BEST MEANS TO AVOID A REPETITION OF ANGOLA. WE WERE, HOWEVER, STRONGLY ADVISED TO URGE OUR GOVERNMENTS TO MAKE THE TASK OF OUR SUPPORTERS EASIER BY ROUNDING UP THE WIDEST POSSIBLE SUPPORT FOR OUR PLAN AMONG OAU MEMBERS AND BY INCREASING THE PACE AND VISIBILITY OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. DUE TO URGENCY OF THE TIMING REFTEL IMPOSED UPON US AND NONAVAILABILITY OF BOTH MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (ATTENDING ALL-DAY CABINET SESSION), MY BRITISH COLLEAGUE (LAMBERT) AND I SAW AMBASSADOR NOUREDDINE MEJDOUB, DIRECTOR (EQUIVALENT TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY) FOR EUROPE AND AMERICAS TO MAKE OUR JOINT DEMARCHE THIS MORNING. MEJDOUB WAS WELL-BRIEFED ON RHODESIAN SITUATION AND READ FROM NOTES OF TALK HE HAD HAD LATE YESTERDAY WITH SECRETARY OF STATE TURKI IN PREPARATION FOR OUR MEETING.

3. MEJDOUB, AFTER LISTENING TO OUR PRESENTATION FROM JOINTLY AGREED TALKING PAPER, TOLD US WE COULD REST ASSURED THE TUNISIAN DELEGATION AT KHARTOUM IS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO GIVE ALL POSSIBLE SUPPORT TO THE ANGLO-US PLAN. THE GOT SEES IT AS THE BEST HOPE FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. IF IT IS SUCCESSFUL WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO AVOID "ANOTHER ANGOLA" AND THAT IT IS "IN THE INTEREST OF ALL AFRICANS".
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HE SUGGESTED THAT WE SHOULD NOT GET IN A PANIC OVER RESOLUTIONS OF THE LIBERATION COMMITTEE AS LONG AS WE HAVE THE SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS.

4. MEJDOUB SAID THAT THE GOT IS FRANKLY CONCERNED THAT THE INTERNAL NATIONALIST LEADERS, MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE, ARE FAST LOSING THE CREDIBILITY AND THAT OUR ROUND TABLE IDEA COULD FOUNDER ON THEIR WEAKNESS. ALL SIGNS, HE SAID, POINT TO AN URGENT NEED FOR THE ANGLO-US EFFORTS TO BE SPEEDED UP. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT UK AND US AT LEAST APPEAR RPT APPEAR TO BE BUSY AND IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE NOT STOP AND TAKE A DEEP BREATH WHEN THE KHARTOUM COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING CONVENES. OUR FRIENDS IN THE OAU WILL WANT TO KNOW THAT WE ARE CONTINUING OUR POSITION ACTIVELY IN ALL OR MOST AFRICAN CAPITALS.

5. AFTER THIS EXCHANGE I DREW ON MY LONG CONNECTIONS WITH THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM TO DISCUSS OTHER ASPECTS AND VARIOUS PERSONALITIES INVOLVED. I LAID PARTICULAR STRESS ON THE NEED FOR AN NEGOTIATED SOLUTION IF ONLY TO PRESERVE AS INTACT AS POSSIBLE ONE OF AFRICA'S MOST VIABLE AND DEVELOPED

ECONOMIES.

6. AS WE WERE LEAVING MEJDOUB TOLD US THAT HE WOULD BE RECEIVING FRG AMBASSADOR (TERFLOTH) AT NOON, WHO ALSO WISHED TO DISCUSS THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM.

7. COMMENT: I THINK WE CAN BE CONFIDENT THAT THE TUNISIANS WILL BE LOBBYING AT KHARTOUM IN FAVOR OF OUR PLAN. CHARACTERISTICALLY THEY WILL MAKE THEIR MAJOR EFFORT IN THE CORRIDORS RATHER THAN ON THE FLOOR WHILE REFRAINING TO GET TOO FAR OUT OF LINE PUBLICLY WITH THE POSITIONS OF THEIR ANTIPATHETIC NEIGHBORS, ALGERIA AND LIBYA.

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8. UNTIL THE ARRIVAL JULY 10 (MONDAY) OF FOREIGN MINISTER FITOURI IN KHARTOUM THE TUNISIAN DELEGATION WILL BE ABLY HEADED BY SADOK BOUZAYEN, DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA AND ASIA (AND RECENTLY NAMED AS AMBASSADOR TO NIGERIA, BENIN, TOGO AND GHANA). HE WILL BE ASSISTED BY BECHIR GUEBLAOU, HEAD OF AFRICAN DIVISION AND AN OLD OAU VETERAN. (GUEBLAOU IS IN LINE TO OPEN GOT'S NEW EMBASSY AT YAOUNDE.)

9. AMBASSADOR TERFLOTH CALLED ME AS THIS WAS IN DRAFT, INDICATED HIS SATISFACTION OVER HIS MEETING WITH MEJDOUB AND INFORMED ME THAT HE WAS ACTING OF FRG INSTRUCTIONS TO FOLLOW UP THE JOIN ANGLO-US DEMARCHE WITH AN INDIVIDUAL ONE. HE UNDERSTANDS THAT THE FRENCH CHARGE (DE LOS SANTOS) WENT TO MOFA ON A SIMILAR MISSION YESTERDAY, BUT THAT RHODESIA WAS ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL AFRICAN ISSUES COVERED.
MULCAHY

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